

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CUBANS IN AFRICA

1. JOURNAL DE GENEVE AND LA SUISSE CARRY EDITORIAL
COMMENT TODAY ON CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA.

2. JOURNAL DE GENEVE, IN A FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL BY ANTOINE
MAURICE, COMMENTS: "DURING THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S
FIRST YEAR THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS AFRICA WENT
THROUGH A CHANGE. A GLOBAL OFFER OF COOPERATION WAS MADE
TO AFRICAN STATES, INCLUDING RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY AND
FREE CHOICE OF DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS. EMPHASIS WAS PLACED
ON SELF-DETERMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND ON HUMAN
RIGHTS. AMERICA WAS ALMOST HOPING THAT THE SOVIET UNION
WOULD JOIN IN AND THAT THE TWO GREAT POWERS WOULD HENCE-
FORTH LIMIT THEIR CONFRONTATION IN AFRICA TO A PEACEFUL
COMPETITION IN WHICH THE BEST MAN WOULD WIN. BUT SOVIET
PUGNACITY HAS BLIGHTED THESE HOPES.

3. "IN THIS CONTEXT, THE QUESTION OF CUBAN INTERVENTION
IN SHABA IS VITAL. FOR PRESIDENT CARTER, IT IS A MATTER
OF PROVING THAT CUBA, BY LENDING ITSELF THIS TIME TO A
VULGAR ENTERPRISE OF DESTABILIZATION, HAS DISCREDITED IT-
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SELF. THAT IT IS TRAMPLING UNDERFOOT THE NON-ALIGNMENT IT
CLAIMS TO SUPPORT, IN ORDER TO SERVE SOVIET EXPANSIONISM.
MAKING THIS PROOF STICK IS NECESSARY TO THE PRESIDENT
TO CONVINCE THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES -- SKEPTICAL
UP TO NOW -- THAT AMERICA MUST REACT IN AFRICA. AND IT IS
ABOVE ALL INDISPENSABLE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF AMERICA'S
CREDIT WITH THE AFRICANS IN SHOWING THAT AMERICA HAD NOT

TAKEN THE INITIATIVE IN A CONFRONTATION WHICH WAS THE VERY THING IT WAS TRYING TO AVOID."

4. LA SUISSE, COMMENTING ON FIDEL CASTRO'S OFFER TO FACILITATE THE DEPARTURE OF PEOPLE OF CUBAN-AMERICAN DOUBLE NATIONALITY WHO WANTED TO LEAVE CUBA, SAYS: "THIS SUDDEN CUBAN ABOUT-FACE MAKES ONE ASK WHAT FIDEL CASTRO IS UP TO? HAS HE ABRUPTLY DECIDED TO KEEP HIS SOVIET ALLIES AT ARM'S LENGTH AND SO PROVE TO THE WESTERN POWERS, AND ABOVE ALL TO THE THIRD WORLD, THAT CUBA HAS NO INTENTION OF PUTTING UP WITH THE INGLORIOUS ROLE OF MOSCOW'S PUPPET?"

5. "OR DOES THE REVOLUTIONARY CARIBBEAN LEADER THINK HE HAS GONE A BIT TOO FAR AND THAT IT IS TIME TO USE THE VELVET GLOVE WITH WASHINGTON, TO BRING HIS POWERFUL NORTHERN NEIGHBOR TO A BETTER FRAME OF MIND?"

6. "BEARING IN MIND CUBAN RELUCTANCE TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN ERITREA IN SUPPORT OF ETHIOPIA, SO AS NOT TO RUN COUNTER TO AFRICAN INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLES, ONE COULD REPLY IN THE AFFIRMATIVE TO THE FIRST QUESTION. BUT, KNOWING MR. CASTRO'S POLITICAL SKILL, SUCH A SUPPOSITION SEEMS PREMATURE, AND EVEN RISKY. IN FACT, IT SEEMS MUCH MORE LIKELY THAT THE TRUTH LIES SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE TWO, AND THAT FIDEL CASTRO IS HOPING BY HIS DOUBLE GAME TO GET UNCLASSIFIED

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RID OF HIS LABEL OF THE 'DESTABILIZER' OF AFRICA."

END HAFREY

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